



**STATEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS FOR THE
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION FOR
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 739
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012
<http://latchildrenscommission.org>**

Monday, June 1, 2015

10:00 AM

AUDIO LINK FOR THE ENTIRE MEETING (15-2667)

Attachments: [AUDIO](#)

Call to Order. (15-2485)

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Kamlager at 10:05 a.m.

Present: Commissioner Candace Cooper, Commissioner Patricia Curry, Commissioner Ann E. Franzen, Commissioner Wendy Garen, Commissioner Sunny Kang, Commissioner John Kim, Commissioner Jacquelyn McCroskey, Commissioner Liz Seipel, Commissioner Wendy B. Smith, Vice Chair Carol O. Biondi and Vice Chair Sydney Kamlager

Excused: Commissioner Geneva Berger, Commissioner Maria Brenes and Commissioner Adrienne Konigar-Macklin

I. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

1. Introductions of the June 1, 2015 meeting attendees. (15-2486)

Self-introductions were made.

2. Approval of the June 1, 2015 Meeting Agenda. (15-2491)

On motion of Commissioner Smith, seconded by Commissioner Seipel, (Commissioners Berger, Brenes, Cooper, Kang, Kim and Konigar-Macklin being absent), this item was approved.

3. Approval of the minutes from the meeting of May 18, 2015. (15-2488)

On motion of Commissioner Garen, seconded by Commissioner Seipel, (Commissioners Berger, Brenes, Cooper, Kang, Kim and Konigar-Macklin being absent), this item was approved.

Attachments: [SEE SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

II. REPORTS

4. Vice Chair's report for June 1, 2015. (15-2489)

Vice Chair Kamlager reported on the following:

- **Celebration '15, honoring the academic achievements of foster youth will be on Thursday, June 18, 2015 at the Walt Disney Concert Hall. Commissioners interested in attending, please RSVP to staff by June 2, 2015.**
- **The LA County Annual System Improvement Plan (SIP) Stakeholder Conference is scheduled for Thursday, June 4, 2015. Commissioners interested in attending, please submit your registration form to staff.**
- **LA County Peer Review Entrance Conference is scheduled for June 22, 2015 from 12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. at the Embassy Suites Hotel, LAX South. Commissioners interested in attending, please let staff know.**
- **LA County Peer Review Exit Conference is scheduled for June 26, 2015 from 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. at the Embassy Suites Hotel, LAX South. Commissioners interested in attending, please let staff know.**

By Common Consent, there being no objection (Commissioners Berger, Brenes and Konigar-Macklin being absent), the Commission accepted Vice Chair Kamlager's report.

5. Department of Children and Family Services Director's Report for June 1, 2015 by Philip Browning, Director. (15-2490)

Director Browning reported on the following:

- **The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) is continuing to hire a new group of workers from various schools of Social Work. In a recent meeting with the Counties of Southern California, the topic of “Social Worker recruitment and retention” was discussed; DCFS hosted**

an aggressive recruitment process, also hiring 1,000 new staff within the last 18 months. Director Browning reported that DCFS loses nearly eight workers for every 100 new workers hired within the first year and was alarmed to learn that other Counties reported an attrition rate of 60% within a two year period.

- The University of California Berkeley Social Work Education Center's (CalSWEC) Title IV-E Master of Social Work Child Welfare Training Program is a specialized academic curriculum that prepares up to 20 students per year. Trainees receive annual stipends of \$18,500 for two years in exchange for a commitment to work at least two years in a California County child welfare service agency after graduation. The greater Los Angeles Area hosts the University Consortium for Children and Families (UCCF). UCCF is a federally funded program and a partnership between County of Los Angeles Department of Children and Families and six Masters of Social Work (MSW) programs from: California State University Los Angeles (CSULA); University of California Los Angeles (UCLA); University of Southern California (USC); California State University Long Beach (CSULB); California State University Dominguez Hills (CSUDH); California State University Northridge (CSUN); and Azusa Pacific University (APU). Stipends are provided annually to full-time MSW students who agree to work for DCFS for at least one year upon graduation. DCFS continues to recruit MSW graduates to fill staffing needs and is expecting nearly 100 students who have a one-year obligation to work in a child welfare capacity. Director Browning reported that other Counties are looking at a similar model for simulation training.
- The State proposed changing the way congregate care is handled in California in order to minimize the number of foster youth in an out-of-home group setting. Currently, there is a structured Group Home concept based on a residential care level rating. A rating of 14 denotes the highest level of care, where children with the most challenging behaviors are placed. Rather than placing these children in a Group Home, the State is moving toward an emphasis on having them placed in a less structured environment such as a foster home with relatives. Director Browning reported that the characteristics of Group Homes will shift to become short-termed in the future and the goal of Congregate Care Reform is to remove children from the intensive Group Care Home setting. Director Browning continues to work with the State to develop a Treatment Foster Home concept for the population of children with high-needs; however, it has been observed that there is low incentive for

two caregivers to leave their full-time jobs to care for a high-needs child on a budget of \$2,100.00 monthly. The State is currently reviewing legislation that would grant \$30 million to be split amongst Counties to fund additional childcare.

- DCFS has been approved to access payment information on the psychotropic medication prescriptions filled from the California Department of Health Care Services' (DHCS) database, which can help DCFS quantify the number of children on psychotropic medications. The County of Los Angeles is the only county that has been able to receive this approval thus far, and other Counties have expressed interest in utilizing this model. DCFS is waiting to receive the requested data.
- DCFS is continuing to work with the Court to automate the psychotropic medication approval process; however, instances where psychotropic medication prescriptions are filled, yet elude the court approval system still remain. These instances typically occur through prescriptions issued by general practitioners who send the youth directly to see a Pharmacist.
- The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) is proposing that as a requirement, DCFS report instances of near-fatalities in addition to fatalities.

In response to questions posed by the Commission, Director Browning responded with the following:

- Important changes will be implemented to obtain certification for 3,000 social workers. At the present time, the certified social workers are typically supervisors within DCFS.
- Within the last ten years, 9,000 foster beds have been lost in Los Angeles County.
- DCFS has foster parent recruitment representatives present at community events. Director Browning reported that more incentives need to be placed on outreach; however, prioritizing work is affected by DCFS's attrition rates and limited resources. As caseloads drop, as a result of the influx of new hires being trained, outreach efforts can be explored.

By Common Consent, there being no objection (Commissioners Berger, Brenes and Konigar-Macklin being absent), the Commission accepted Director Browning's report.

III. DISCUSSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

6. Discussion on the Youth and Children's Welcome Center; and take appropriate action on the findings and recommendations as presented by Commissioners Curry, Seipel and Smith. (15-2487)

Commissioners Curry, Seipel and Smith reported on the following:

- **As a result of a recent article published in the Los Angeles Times regarding the Youth Welcome Center (YWC) and the Children's Welcome Center (CWC), the Commission hosted a discussion and subsequently formed an ad-hoc work group to monitor the issues surrounding the CWC and YWC. After much analysis, the ad-hoc work group recognized these issues as complex in nature and in need of several different solutions to address the multitude of problems.**
- **The report is intended to serve as a starting point of discussion on how the County of Los Angeles can improve the CWC, the YWC, the number of foster parents, and the issues relating to the number of foster parents that cause children to end up at the CWC and YWC. Legislative changes to childcare at the State level will ultimately affect the County of Los Angeles' actions.**
- **Children awaiting placement were housed at the offices of social workers and the Command Post as a result of MacLaren Children's Center closing. The CWC and YWC were established as a result of both the State and Community deeming the offices of social workers and the Command Post as unacceptable facilities to house this population.**
- **The CWC manages children ages 0-11 years of age, while the YWC manages youth 12-20 years of age. Aside from this age gap, distinct differences in the problems associated with both age groups exist as well. DCFS is taking steps to license the CWC and the YWC in order for children to stay at the centers for 72-hours; however, the requirements needed for licensing will be of substantial cost to DCFS. Becoming licensed will require that showers be installed, an education room be established, and that the facilities be equipped with dormitory-styled accommodations in addition to requiring more staff to supervise the children during the longer 72-hour time period.**
- **Young children ages 0-5 years and older youth ages 14-18 years are entering the CWC and YWC with greater frequency than that of children from the in-between ages.**

The statistics representing the repeat entries to the CWC and YWC reveal a larger issue that needs to be addressed in terms of servicing this youth population. The lack of sufficient placements that match the needs of the youth is seen as a barrier. Conversely a lack of support for foster parents caring for children with high-needs exists.

- Court-mandated visitations, between children in foster care and their parents, have been observed as difficult for foster parents to fulfill. For instance, a foster parent caring for three children may each have a requirement of three visitations per week with up to two different parents. The ad-hoc committee proposed finding other methods of transporting and monitoring these visitations through individuals other than foster parents as a possible solution.
- By January 2017, the State will require that all foster parents --including relative care givers-- are dually-certified. Dual certification for relative care givers falls under the name: Resource Family Approval for Permanency. Becoming dually certified is both costly and time-consuming as fingerprinting and other prerequisites are required.

In response to questions posed by the Commission, the ad-hoc committee responded as follows:

- Sixty-eight to seventy percent of children at the CWC are new detainees that do not have an open case with DCFS. There is potential for the CWC to be a 72-hour assessment center.
- A child described to have a “Serious Mental Health Problem” (as shown in the supporting document) pertains to a child who has been diagnosed at some point in his or her history, in addition to suffering from behavioral manifestations.
- The first quarter of 2015, which the data was extracted from, exemplifies a representative sample. Maricruz Trevino, DCFS Director of CWC and YWC, reported that the high-volume intake months include: October, March, and the end of the school year months of May and June.

By Common Consent, there being no objection (Commissioners Berger, Brenes and Konigar Macklin being absent), the Commission accepted the ad-hoc committee's report.

Attachments: [SEE SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)
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7. Discussion and recommendations on the past presentations from July 2014 to Present. (15-2496)

Vice Chair Kamlager encouraged the Commissioners to review the supporting document and inform the Vice Chairs and staff about any interest in revisiting past presentations.

Attachments: [SEE SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

8. Discussion and representation to various committees/commissions on behalf of the Commission for Children and Families. (15-2497)

Vice Chair Kamlager encouraged the Commissioners to review the supporting document and make known whether any of the sub-committees are of interest to Commissioners in the coming months; as the Commission is in the process of potentially redesigning and/or adding new members to the committees in light of the recent Commission appointments and replacements.

Attachments: [SEE SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

IV. MISCELLANEOUS

Matters Not Posted

9. Matters not posted on the agenda, to be discussed and (if requested) placed on the agenda for action at a future meeting of the Commission, or matters requiring immediate action because of an emergency situation or where the need to take action arose subsequent to the posting of the agenda. (15-2492)

There were none.

Announcements

10. Announcements for the meeting of June 1, 2015. (15-2493)

There were none.

Public Comment

11. Opportunity for members of the public to address the Commission on item(s) of interest that are within the jurisdiction of the Commission. (15-2494)

No members of the public addressed the Commission.

Adjournment

12. Adjournment for the meeting of June 1, 2015. (15-2495)

The meeting adjourned at 12:04 p.m.